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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 15th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. VILCHEZ ASHER (Nicaragua)

later: Mr. AMARI (Tunisia)
(Vice-Chairman)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 116: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997 (continued) (A/50/6 (Vols. I and II), A/50/7 and A/50/16)

First reading (continued)

Section 7A. Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development

Section 7B. Africa: critical economic situation, recovery and development

Section 8. Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis

Section 9. Department for Development Support and Management Services

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, Mr. Mselle, to introduce sections 7A, 7B, 8 and 9 of the draft programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

2. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) introduced the paragraphs of the Advisory Committee's report (A/50/7), corresponding to sections 7A, 7B, 8 and 9. In paragraph IV.2, the Advisory Committee noted the establishment by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), at the request of the Secretary-General, of an Office of United Nations System Support and Services, inter alia, to support the Administrator in his responsibility of ensuring system-wide coordination and policy coherence in view of the responsibility of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development in that regard. The Advisory Committee had requested that the matter be clarified and had noted that much more detailed observations on the matter had been made to the Executive Board of UNDP.

3. With regard to paragraph IV.5, the Advisory Committee urged the relevant intergovernmental bodies which benefited from the services of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development to participate much more actively in the review of the Department's programme of work.

4. In paragraph IV.6, the Advisory Committee was of the view that information should be provided to the General Assembly on the use of the $500,000 which the Assembly had authorized as a United Nations contribution to the financing of the activities of the Non-Governmental Liaison Service. As recalled in that paragraph, the General Assembly had indicated that such financing would not be used for salaries, travel and representation activities.

5. In paragraph IV.4, the Advisory Committee recommended the approval of the request for the creation of three posts for sustainable development activities.

6. It was important to monitor the steady increase in expenditures on services provided to the more than 1,500 non-governmental organizations, in order to determine whether measures should be taken to meet those expenditures. The Advisory Committee referred to that question in paragraph IV.8.

7. In that connection, the Advisory Committee welcomed the proposal to establish an Information Support Unit, which would, inter alia, assist the Department to more closely monitor the increase in the above-mentioned activities, including the mandates of intergovernmental bodies and their related activities.

8. The amount of $3,787,600 proposed under section 7B would be allocated to the three subprogrammes to be implemented by the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, the Economic Commission for Africa and the Department of Public Information. In paragraph IV.16, the Advisory Committee regretted the fact that the post of Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries had remained unfilled for an extended period and recommended that the situation be rectified as quickly as possible.

9. With regard to section 8, the Advisory Committee recommended in paragraph IV.20 of its report the approval of the four posts requested for the new Division for Micro-economic and Social Policy Analysis in the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis (DESIPA). However, in paragraph IV.21, it recommended that the additional post which had been requested for follow-up activities to the International Conference on Population and Development should be provided through redeployment.

10. As for section 9, paragraph IV.27 referred to the procurement services which were being undertaken by both the Department for Development Support and Management Services and the Department of Administration and Management. In that regard, the Advisory Committee questioned the need for two procurement services and recommended that the Secretary-General should review the situation with a view to merging the procurement services in the two Departments and ensuring appropriate coordination with other United Nations procurement services.

11. The proposals referred to in paragraph IV.26 had been the subject of extensive debates; the Advisory Committee, as indicated in the corrigendum to its report, had not taken a position on the resource requirements related to those proposals.

Section 7A. Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development

12. Mr. AMARI (Tunisia) asked the Secretariat for information regarding the legislative mandate under which the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), at the request of the Secretary-General, was authorized to establish an Office of United Nations System Support and Services, inter alia, to support the Administrator in his responsibility to assist the Secretary-General in ensuring system-wide coordination and policy coherence. He likewise supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation contained in paragraph IV.4 of its report (A/50/7).

13. Regarding paragraph IV.6, dealing with the United Nations contribution to the financing of the activities of the Non-Governmental Liaison Service, his delegation supported the Advisory Committee's proposal that, before the General Assembly approved the request of $500,000, the Service should submit a report on the use of the amount contributed. He also recalled that, during informal consultations, he had already requested clarification regarding travel by some members of subsidiary bodies, such as the Advisory Committee and the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), and regarding travel by members of non-governmental organizations.

14. Mrs. RODRÍGUEZ ABASCAL (Cuba) regretted that resources allocated for section 7A should have declined by 15.1 per cent against the budget for the biennium 1994-1995, given the priority accorded by the Organization to most activities conducted by the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. Although activities connected with preparing and holding the world conferences had ended, it was still necessary to conduct complementary activities; the level of funding allocated was not sufficient to carry out all the programmed and related activities resulting from the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

15. Paragraph 7A.2 of the proposed programme budget (A/50/6/Rev.1) stated that the principal responsibility of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development was to provide support for the central coordinating functions, among other activities. In that connection, she noted that, as indicated by the Advisory Committee in paragraph IV.2 of its report, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), at the request of the Secretary-General, had established an Office of United Nations System Support and Services, inter alia, to support the Administrator in his responsibility to assist the Secretary-General in ensuring system-wide coordination and policy coherence. Her delegation, like that of Tunisia, wished to know how the Secretary-General was mandated to instruct the Administrator of UNDP to carry out that function, and what repercussions the Administrator's new activity would have on the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. In her view, two structures were being created to carry out practically identical functions.

16. The 15.1 per cent reduction in resources allocated to the Committee for Sustainable Development was disproportionate to the increase in resources allocated to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and her delegation wished to know how that situation had arisen. She supported the proposal regarding establishment of one P-5 and one P-4 post for the follow-up to the Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, contained in paragraph 7A.59 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

17. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Russian Federation), responding to the observations made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph IV.5 of its report regarding the importance of intergovernmental review of the entire programme of work of the Department for Social Policy and Sustainable Development, particularly with a view to reducing the volume of documentation, said that his delegation considered it both possible and necessary to reduce that volume without affecting the activities of the programme or mandates. Such a measure would not only make it

possible to rationalize the work of various bodies, but would also permit major savings to be made.

18. On the subject of the estimated $500,000 United Nations contribution to the financing of the activities of the Non-Governmental Liaison Service, his delegation shared the Advisory Committee's opinion that before the General Assembly approved the request of $500,000, information should be provided regarding the use of the amount contributed. As stated in the Advisory Committee's report, those funds should not be used for salaries, travel and representation activities. Therefore, he would like the representative of the Secretariat to inform him of the purpose and destination of those funds.

19. Regarding the matter of more rational and efficient organization of the activities of the Non-Governmental Liaison Service, he stated that the Advisory Committee had been informed that the Service would continue to provide support and assistance to major United Nations system conferences, forums and events such as Habitat II, the Ninth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the World Food Summit to be held at FAO headquarters. Since such organizations already had an established system of public information and liaison with non-governmental organizations, thought might be given to whether activities were being duplicated and funds expended unnecessarily. He welcomed the initiative to create an Information Support Unit, provided it concentrated on collection, coordination and dissemination of information, which tasks were of vital importance during the current stage of the Department's activities.

20. Mr. GOKHALE (India) noted that the total budget for the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development had been reduced; while he understood that the reduction was connected with the disappearance of certain stand-alone activities, primarily major international conferences, he noted that travel expenses had also been eliminated. He pointed out that the purpose of the Department was to coordinate policies, and that accordingly, it could not operate effectively without close contact with other intergovernmental bodies on policy issues. His delegation therefore considered that the travel budget initially proposed by the Department should be restored.

21. He shared the Cuban and Tunisian delegation's interest in knowing exactly what new functions the UNDP Administrator was to perform. In that connection, he recalled that the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development had been established in 1992, apparently because there were policy coordination problems, and that an Assistant Secretary-General post had also been established for that purpose. The Secretariat had explained that the Administrator's task was to provide personal support to the Secretary-General but he wondered whether a function of a personal nature could be carried out in an organization composed of Member States.

22. India supported the recommendations formulated by the Advisory Committee in paragraph IV.4 of its report regarding establishment of posts to strengthen the capacity of the Division for Sustainable Development and to carry out follow-up activities to the Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

23. During recent discussions in CPC, it had been agreed that an increase in the Department's budget would be proposed in the event that the General Assembly decided to establish new mandates and legislative activities, particularly in the context of the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women. His delegation requested the Secretariat to indicate what measures it considered should be adopted in that connection.

24. It was not clear whether the organizational chart provided by the Secretariat reflected the current structure of the Organization, or its structure under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 if the Committee accepted all the Secretariat's proposals. For instance, it was not possible to ascertain the whereabouts in the Department of Political Affairs of the 43 new posts relating to preventive diplomacy and peace-keeping, and the same was true in other parts of the organizational chart. As a result, he urged the Secretariat to furnish further information and to indicate clearly what the current structure was and which posts it sought to establish or eliminate, since in the absence of such information, his delegation would not be able to participate constructively in the informal consultations.

25. Mr. FATTAH (Egypt) agreed with the views expressed by the representatives of India, Tunisia and Cuba, and expressed his concern regarding the scant resources available for such an important Department. The fact that the international conferences were over did not mean that there should be any change in the resources allocated to the economic and social spheres: on the contrary, they should be increased in order to be able to implement the recommendations emerging from those conferences.

26. Mr. ALOM (Bangladesh) said that, because Bangladesh was a developing country and, more specifically, among the least developed, it considered the section to be of great interest. He reiterated his reservations with respect to the reduction in the budget for the important United Nations activities it covered, and supported the statements of the representatives of India, Cuba and Tunisia.

27. The interest of Bangladesh focused not on the Department as such, but rather on the management of its activities. No other department concerned itself with sustainable development, and those activities did not end with the holding of a conference or an administrative action. The Department should also take responsibility for implementing the recommendations adopted. His delegation did not understand how a budget could be drawn up in which no resources were provided for giving effect to the recommendations adopted by at least two or three of the most important conferences, whose goals had focused on development activities and the developing countries in particular. He wondered if the United Nations had the intention of carrying out those important activities, which were, moreover, provided for in the Charter of the United Nations; or whether it believed that it was enough just to hold international conferences. Although UNDP was one of the intergovernmental organizations with responsibility for development activities, there were many other issues on which the international community had made recommendations over the course of the latest conferences which UNDP could not implement alone. Therefore, it was necessary to allocate funds for such activities, in the interests of the development of the whole world, and in particular of the developing countries.

28. Mr. HAMID (Sudan) joined with other delegations in stating that the resources assigned to the section should not be reduced. Activities in the economic and social spheres were directly linked to the interests of the developing countries and future sustainable development. Therefore the budget estimates should not be reduced, so as not to produce a negative impact on such activities.

29. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that, indeed, as shown in table 7A.1, resources had been reduced by $7 million. That did not mean that priority was not being assigned to the Department. In paragraph 7A.9 of the proposed programme budget, the factors explaining the reduction were listed. First, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change would have a separate secretariat from the end of 1995, so that the Department would no longer be responsible for providing secretariat services. Those activities would be financed outside the United Nations programme budget, which would represent a reduction of some $3 million in the amount allocated to the Department. Another important element was the number of conferences held during the biennium 1994-1995: the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women. The appropriations allocated for the preparation and holding of those conferences, which had amounted to some $4 million, would not be renewed. A reduction of $600,000 had also resulted because of services that would no longer be provided to the World Food Council. Taking into account the costs which would not recur in the coming biennium, it had been possible to include the new follow-up activities to the world conferences and to request additional posts for their implementation.

30. Many objects of expenditure, including travel, related to one-time expenditures; that also resulted in an apparent reduction in resources, but did not mean that the Department would receive less resources than it did currently for the execution of its programme of work.

31. A reduction of one General Service post had been decided on in the context of increasing the efficiency of the Secretariat. That was possible through rationalization of the relevant functions.

32. As for the policy coordination function, no change had been made. That would not prevent the Secretariat from taking other measures to strengthen programme coordination, including operational activities or emergency assistance, for example. The Secretary-General, naturally, had the primary responsibility for coordination, but additional support was also required.

33. Mr. HALBWACHS (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division), replying to the representative of Cuba, said that additional funds were requested for the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, as it was expected that in 1996 it would hold an additional three-week session in order to deal with the backlog in considering reports submitted by States Parties.

34. The reduction in resources allocated to the Commission on Sustainable Development was based on an analysis of costs over the past two years.

35. With respect to the Non-Governmental Liaison Service, written information would be provided before the informal consultations.

36. The organizational chart had fulfilled the request of the General Assembly. A chart had been prepared reflecting the budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997, and it could be seen that all the new posts and reclassifications were explained in footnotes. Post reductions had not been included, but could be included in the future.

37. With regard to intergovernmental consultations, the calendar of conferences would be reviewed in order to find an opportunity to hold more extensive consultations with specialized intergovernmental bodies before preparing the proposed programme budget for submission to the Committee on Programme and Coordination, the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee for their consideration.

38. Mrs. RODRÍGUEZ ABASCAL (Cuba) repeated her question regarding the mandate given for the establishment of an Office for United Nations System Support and Services and asked what General Assembly resolution had established the new functions of the Administrator of UNDP.

39. Mr. GOKHALE (India) asked if the Secretariat intended to allocate additional funds for activities arising from the decisions taken at the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women. He also requested clarification of the organizational charts, which did not explain to which departments the new posts would be assigned. For example, it was not clear to which divisions or units of the Department of Political Affairs the 43 posts for preventive diplomacy and peace-keeping would be allocated. For proposals for the creation of new posts to be examined, delegations should know the units to which they would be added. The footnotes did not explain that, and it was very difficult to discuss the matter under those conditions.

40. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that no legislative mandate was needed from the General Assembly to administer and strengthen the coordination of system-wide economic and social activities. The mandates of the Department and UNDP had not changed. The latter had responsibility for coordinating operational activities, and the Administrator assisted the Secretary-General in that respect.

41. With respect to follow-up activities to the world conferences, in those cases where a concrete mandate existed but resources were insufficient, additional resources had been requested in the proposed budget. However, those activities for which no specific mandate existed had not been included in the budget. Some additional posts were included for activities related to sustainable development, including those concerning small island developing States. Additional posts were also included for follow-up activities to the Cairo Conference, under section 8. With respect to the Beijing Conference, the post of Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women had been reclassified to the D-2 level. As for the specific measures adopted in the Beijing Platform, such mandates or activities as strengthening of coordination in the United Nations system in that area had been agreed upon. The resources

requested for those activities would probably be insufficient, and the Secretariat was proposing a request for additional allocations.

42. The Secretariat had not prepared organizational charts before, and thus, they might be imperfect and might not provide all the information desired by delegations. Nevertheless, as far as the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development was concerned, it was indicated that additional posts were requested, and no major restructuring would take place compared to the previous biennium. In cases where a significant restructuring had occurred, as in the Department of Political Affairs, the organizational chart could be drawn up in a different way to facilitate comparison between bienniums.

43. Mrs. RODRÍGUEZ ABASCAL (Cuba) said that she was not satisfied with the Controller's reply. Since the General Assembly had assigned the coordination functions to the Department in resolution 47/212 B, the Secretary-General ought to have had the consent of the Assembly before assigning new functions to the Administrator of UNDP. It was for the General Assembly to decide on that very important political issue.

44. Ms. ALMAO (New Zealand) said it was her understanding that at the recent meeting of the Administrative Committee on Coordination the executive heads of the specialized agencies had established four task forces with specific responsibility for the follow-up activities to the international conferences held in the last few years, with the exception of the Beijing Conference, for which the relevant working group would be set up once the General Assembly had studied the Platform for Action. Her delegation wished to know if more information would be forthcoming in the informal consultations on the decisions of the Administrative Committee on Coordination with respect to follow-up activities to the conferences, as consideration of the question would benefit from more background information.

45. The CHAIRMAN said that the relevant additional information would be given. If there were no further comments, he would take it that the Fifth Committee had completed the first reading of section 7A of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 and that it had decided to refer the matter to the informal consultations for further review and appropriate action.

Section 7B. Africa: critical economic situation, recovery and development

46. Mr. ETUKET (Uganda) said that he attached great importance to section 7B of the proposed budget and noted that in table 7B.1 the Secretary-General proposed an amount of $3.7 million for activities covered by that section, and that the extrabudgetary resources amounted to almost $600,000 for the biennium. As the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had pointed out, it was a modest amount, which did not correspond to the responsibilities to be taken on in the coming two years for the recovery and development of Africa. An amount of $4 million had been spent on recent conferences and it would be interesting to know how much it had cost to prepare for and celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

47. Speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, he expressed his concern about the low level of resources and fully agreed with the comment of CPC (A/50/16, para. 101) that the General Assembly should reconsider the level of resources allocated to activities concerned with Africa.

48. On the question of the distribution of resources proposed in table 7B.1, although he welcomed the proposal to create two new P-3 posts, he thought that the resources could have been apportioned between the programmes in a way which more closely matched the priorities set by the General Assembly. He suggested that the Secretariat should reconsider the proposed distribution of resources.

49. Referring to subprogramme 1, he expressed concern, as had the Advisory Committee in paragraph IV.16 of its report, that even the limited resources being allocated could be diverted to other ends, and he asked for clarification from the Secretariat on that point. The Secretariat had to take fully into account the high priority given by the General Assembly to activities to aid the recovery and development of Africa, and it had to propose an adequate level of resources.

50. He noted the activities to be undertaken by the Department of Public Information, supported the latter's efforts to publicize throughout the world the critical economic situation in Africa and urged that sufficient resources should be allocated to it.

51. On the question of resources required under the heading of consultants and experts, his delegation supported the use of resources for activities in which the Secretariat had no expertise, but it was important to develop an in-house capability for those purposes. The resources allocated to subprogramme 3 could perhaps then be used for more substantive activities.

52. It had been repeatedly stated that the Secretary-General should be allowed flexibility in the use of resources for African recovery and development. His delegation stressed that it would support that flexibility only if the priorities which had been set were taken into account; it was not in favour of redeploying resources which had been allocated to priority activities.

53. Mr. Amari (Tunisia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

54. Mr. FAGUNDES (Brazil) fully shared the view that the total budgetary provision for section 7B was not sufficient to cover the needs of the African countries. He also believed that the recommendation in the report of the Advisory Committee in favour of establishing two new P-3 posts in the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development and the Economic Commission for Africa should be adopted. The campaign to promote world-wide awareness of the critical economic situation in Africa should also be adequately funded.

55. Mr. FATTAH (Egypt) agreed with the representative of Uganda that the resources intended for Africa in section 7B were very limited. As to the problems concerning the post of Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries, mentioned in paragraph IV.16 of the Advisory Committee's report, he hoped the situation would be rectified.

56. Mrs. SHEAROUSE (United States of America) said that in the view of her delegation the creation of a new budget section for the situation in Africa offered no administrative or programmatic advantages. On the contrary, it limited the potential of the Secretary-General to redeploy more resources to that programme, since it would be administratively difficult for the Secretary-General to redeploy resources between sections in the coming biennium. She agreed that the resources for section 7B were limited if looked at in isolation, but that budget section had to be considered in the context of the other sections, and the resources for Africa in all of them had also to be taken into account in order to make an informed decision on whether the Secretary-General's proposals accorded the priority to the question that it deserved. Her delegation believed that there was no need to create the two new posts, as their functions could be absorbed by the Departments for which the posts were intended.

57. Mrs. RODRÍGUEZ ABASCAL (Cuba), Mr. DJACTA (Algeria), Mr. AKPLOGAN (Benin), Mr. MALAN (Côte d'Ivoire), Mr. OWADE (Kenya) and Mr. NKOUNKOU (Congo) agreed with the representative of Uganda that the resources for section 7B were insufficient.

58. Mr. ALOM (Bangladesh) suggested that the Secretary-General should implement the recommendation made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph IV.16 of its report and should rectify the decision taken on the provision of the post of Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries, as it flatly contradicted the decision adopted at the most recent mid-term global review meeting, which had emphasized that special attention should be paid to the needs of the least developed countries and Africa.

59. Mr. ETUKET (Uganda) said that his delegation would be glad to study carefully all the budget sections and that it would seek justification for all the proposals in them. As far as the creation of two new posts was concerned, his delegation was ready to discuss the matter with those delegations which considered it an unnecessary measure.

60. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), replying to the comments of delegations on section 7B, said that on the question of the total provision for that section, it had to be borne in mind that the resources requested were for activities to coordinate assistance to Africa, not for direct assistance in all areas to that continent. Thus, they did not represent the total resources which the United Nations was allocating to Africa. He emphasized that the budget for the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries had actually been increased by 9.2 per cent over the previous biennium and tnat, although the increase appeared modest, if it was compared with the increase in other sections it would be found to be the second largest increase in the new budget proposals.

61. With regard to the comparative monitoring of costs for the servicing of United Nations conferences, he warned against hasty comparisons, since those conferences played a very important role in promoting social development and the advancement of women, and had brought Governments and non-governmental bodies closer together. He was convinced that the resources allocated to those conferences had been money well spent.

62. He hoped that the situation described in paragraph IV.16 of the Advisory Committee's report would soon be restored to normal, given that the incumbent had returned to his post of Coordinator.

63. As for expenditure on consultants and experts, he said that resources for that purpose would be required under subprogrammes 1 and 2 but not under subprogramme 3.

64. Mr. ETUKET (Uganda), reacting to the Controller's comments, said that it would be useful if the Secretariat could submit, as part of the mid-term review of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, a breakdown of all resources earmarked for the development and recovery of Africa, both inside and outside the United Nations system. However, he disagreed with the Controller's interpretation of the 9.2 per cent increase in resources for the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries; while that increment was the second largest in relative terms, it was insignificant in absolute terms.

65. The CHAIRMAN said he took it that the Committee had concluded the first reading of section 7B of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 and decided to refer it to the informal consultations for further consideration and appropriate action.

Section 8. Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis

66. Mr. MIHAI (Romania) welcomed the initiative of the Secretary-General to establish the Division for Micro-economic and Social Policy Analysis and expressed his delegation's support for the programmes outlined in section 8, in particular subprogramme 5 as well as the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph IV.20 of its report.

67. Mr. GOKHALE (India) said that, while his delegation generally agreed with the budget proposals in section 8, it had reservations, which it had already expressed in the Committee for Programme and Coordination, about the need for the establishment of a new Division for Micro-economic and Social Policy Analysis. The Division's mandate could be implemented within the framework of the current organizational structure of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis. While he had taken note of the Advisory Committee's recommendation to approve the request for four additional posts, he was not convinced that they were necessary.

68. The Committee for Programme and Coordination had been unable to agree on the narrative of the programmes under section 8 and his delegation continued to have reservations with respect to subprogramme 2, Problems and prospects of integrated development, particularly the reference in paragraph 8.42 to the implementation of activities in the area of security, economics and reporting to the Security Council on socio-economic aspects of post-conflict peace-building and the development continuum. That had nothing to do with the mandate of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis; the paragraph should be amended accordingly to reflect that fact.

69. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Russian Federation) said that his delegation generally welcomed the approach used by the Secretariat in preparing the Department's proposed programme budget and agreed with the Advisory Committee's conclusions and recommendations. The mandates approved by the intergovernmental bodies which had been reflected in the proposed programme budget included such important topics as the respective roles of the market and the State in economic and social development, and the continuation of economic and social reforms in central and eastern Europe. He hoped that the modest resources allocated to those issues would be used in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

70. Mr. TOYA (Japan) took note of the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the addition P-5 post which had been requested for activities related to the follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development should be provided from the resources allocated through redeployment, while the four posts for the Division for Micro-economic and Social Policy Analysis would be additional. He was not entirely convinced of the need for those four new posts and proposed that one of them should be reallocated to follow-up activities to the Conference in order to ensure maximum efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

71. Mr. GOUMENY (Ukraine) welcomed the establishment of the Division for Micro-economic and Social Policy Analysis, which would permit the implementation of a number of mandates established by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh and forty-eighth sessions, in particular resolution 47/187. He welcomed the savings achieved by the Secretary-General, which resulted in a reduction of $344,100 in the level of resources proposed for the Department as well as in a decline in the total number of posts; he would, however, not hesitate to support the establishment of new posts whenever necessary in order to implement more effectively the mandates established for the Division for Micro-economic and Social Policy Analysis.

72. With respect to subprogramme 2, the narrative in paragraph 8.42 was fully in line with the mandate established by Member States in that area, especially with respect to the impact of economic sanctions on third States. He also endorsed the narrative in paragraphs 8.43 and 8.44 for subprogramme 5. With respect to resource requirements (para. 8.45), the reclassification of one P-4 post to the P-5 level was fully justified.

73. Mr. DIMOV (Bulgaria) said that his delegation supported the establishment of the Division for Micro-economic and Social Policy Analysis. Sufficient resources should be provided for activities relating to the continuation of economic and social reforms in countries with economies in transition and to reporting to the Security Council and the General Assembly on the implementation of multilateral economic sanctions under General Assembly resolution 49/21 A. He also endorsed the establishment of the posts proposed in paragraph IV.20 of the Advisory Committee's report.

74. Mr. ALOM (Bangladesh) said that the United Nations generally followed a global macroeconomic approach. While micro-economic analysis might be necessary in certain situations, such as that of countries with economies in transition, such temporary programmes, whose features depended on the peculiar circumstances of each case, did not justify the establishment of a permanent structure such as the Division for Micro-economic and Social Policy Analysis. The professional

qualifications of the staff recruited to fill the new posts might well not be the most appropriate in the future, since the subjects of study might not necessarily remain the same. The Secretariat should consider having recourse to consultants, study centres or intergovernmental organizations, as appropriate, to carry out those specific analyses. Such an approach would be more cost effective.

75. Ms. BUERGO (Cuba) expressed concern at the re-interpretation under paragraph 8.3 of the overall objectives of the Department. It had been indicated in the Medium-Term Plan for the period 1992-1997 that "the goal of the programme is to assist intergovernmental bodies in their responsibility to address international development issues and to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character" as well as to "bring to the attention of intergovernmental bodies new and emerging economic and social issues that would affect world development" (A/47/6/Rev.1, para. 12.1). There was no legislative authority for expanding the scope of the Department's activities beyond Governments and intergovernmental organizations and she would therefore welcome a clarification from the Secretariat on the matter.

76. She drew attention to the reduction in the resources requested for the Department's programmes, in particular the possibility that such reduction would affect follow-up activities to the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women. At the same time, she was concerned at the duplication of efforts resulting from the linking of the Department's activities with early warning and analytical capabilities that were being developed in the political and humanitarian sectors (para. 8.8).

77. Her delegation was concerned by the manner in which resources were distributed among the various subprogrammes of programme 12, Global development issues and policies, and drew attention in particular to the fact that subprogramme 3, External debt and development, had received the fewest resources although the General Assembly had given it top priority. She asked the Secretariat to explain the rationale for the allocation of resources.

78. Regarding subprogramme 1, Monitoring and assessment of current global economic issues and policies, she was struck by the fact that analytical support would be provided for the review and appraisal of the agenda for development, upon its adoption (para. 8.30). She requested information regarding the legislative basis requiring the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis to review and appraise the agenda for development following its adoption by the General Assembly.

79. She agreed with the observations made by the Indian delegation and shared the concerns which that delegation had expressed during the deliberations in CPC on the proposed programme budget under consideration. She was surprised by the discrepancies between the description of the subprogramme in the budget documents and that contained in the medium-term plan which had been under consideration earlier and on which work was proceeding. She was particularly concerned by the use of such concepts as that of security economics which had

appeared for the first time in several Secretariat documents and regarding which the General Assembly had not yet taken any decision.

80. During informal negotiations, her delegation would endeavour to amend paragraph 8.42 of the proposed programme budget on the subject of submission of reports to the Assembly and the Security Council on several of the activities listed in that paragraph. It did not agree with the observations the paragraph contained or with the tasks to be allocated to the Department in connection with activities which should rightly fall to the Security Council since they concerned the implementation of multilateral economic sanctions and post-conflict peace-building. It was not appropriate to link activities of that nature with the development needs to which paragraph 8.42 referred specifically.

81. In connection with the various subprogrammes listed in paragraph 8.55 of programme 18, Population, and the percentage distribution of resources among subprogrammes, her delegation was struck by the fact that subprogramme 5, Technical cooperation in population, did not reflect the high priority assigned to it by the General Assembly, in line with the medium-term plan, and that the resources allocated failed to reflect that priority.

82. Mr. ETUKET (Uganda) said that his delegation shared the views put forward by the representatives of India and Cuba, among others, and expressed its support for the work of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis. Regarding the four new posts referred to in paragraph IV.20 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/50/7), it shared that Committee's interest in the description of the functions of the proposed posts. He noted that the Committee had received that information and requested that the Secretariat should give him access to it also.

83. Mr. HALBWACHS (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) said that the subject of activities connected with micro-economic issues had been under consideration for several years. In the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, the Secretary-General had requested four new posts to carry out tasks relating to micro-economic issues, including one D-2 post; on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the General Assembly had asked the Secretary-General to provide a sufficient number of posts, through redeployment, to carry out the activities relating to micro-economic issues. Although the need for such posts had been recognized two years previously, the Secretary-General had been asked to endeavour to meet that need through redeployment, which had been undertaken during the biennium 1994-1995 and during preparation of the proposed budget for the biennium 1996-1997. As was apparent from the proposed budget, it had been possible to create three of the proposed four posts in that manner. The same was not true of the fourth post (D-2), and the Secretary-General had therefore proposed that a new post should be created. He welcomed the Advisory Committee's judgement that the proposal was justified, since the new post would make it possible to establish an independent division for micro-economic issues.

84. The relationship between resources allocated and individual subprogrammes depended primarily on the workload. The fact that more resources were allocated to a given subprogramme did not imply an order of priority. Thus, the 9 per cent proposed for subprogramme 3 of programme 12, External debt, did not

mean that the subprogramme in question was of greater or lesser importance. Indeed, the General Assembly considered it to be a priority subprogramme. The same was true of subprogrammes 4 and 5 on population, which, while receiving fewer resources in the regular budget, would receive additional extrabudgetary resources, particularly subprogramme 5, Technical cooperation.

85. Although redeployment had been achieved in relation to micro-economic issues, the same result had not proved possible in the case of the P-5 post for population issues. Therefore the Secretary-General had been obliged to propose the creation of a new post in that sphere.

86. CPC had already dealt in detail with the question of the activities of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development in the area of security economics and submission of reports to the General Assembly regarding multilateral economic sanctions. The matter involved mandates specifically established in resolution 843 (1993) of the Security Council and in several General Assembly resolutions. In addition, the Programme Planning and Budget Division had drawn up a three-page document for CPC which would be distributed to Committee members during informal consultations and prior to informal negotiations.

87. The Ugandan delegation would be furnished with the requested descriptions of posts connected with micro-economic issues. The Cuban delegation would receive a written response during informal consultations to its question regarding paragraph 8.43 of the proposed programme budget.

Section 9. Department for Development Support and Management Services

88. Mrs. SHEAROUSE (United States of America) said that it was increasingly difficult to justify the budget for the Department for Development Support and Management Services and, consequently, its resources should be consolidated and redeployed to other United Nations bodies responsible for the relevant programming and technical cooperation activities. The diffuse nature of the Department's current activities revealed a grab bag of poorly managed functions without a particular mission, derogating from the prerogatives of other United Nations entities in the area of technical cooperation.

89. The Department's broad programme responsibilities overlapped with the responsibilities and technical cooperation activities of the voluntary funds and programmes of the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). The capacity-building function was at the centre of the mandate of both UNDP and the Department. The responsibility for coordination of technical cooperation activities was also held by other elements within the United Nations system, such as the Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development and the UNDP Administrator. Also, changing circumstances suggested that the functions of the Department could be and already were adequately and appropriately performed by other elements of the United Nations system.

90. The Department's functions could be absorbed by the Office of Project Services - the executive arm of UNDP. The Executive Board of UNDP had reviewed

the future of the Office of Project Services for over a year and had recommended against the proposal to merge the Office into the United Nations Secretariat. As a compromise, it had urged that the Office should be recognized as a separate and semi-autonomous entity with an internal accountability system separate from that of UNDP. The Office of Project Services, as a donor-driven manager of voluntary contributions, had an incentive to be more accountable and efficient than the Department for Development Support and Management Services, which was funded under the regular budget.

91. Her delegation concurred with the Advisory Committee's observations on travel costs and procurement services. In line with the overall policy of the United States of America regarding the establishment of new posts, she suggested that the functions of the P-3 post should be approved, but should be entrusted to existing staff.

92. Mr. FATTAH (Egypt) said that his delegation supported the Department's activities and believed that it should be allocated all the necessary resources to carry out its programmes. Regarding the proposed transfer of 17 posts from Geneva to New York and Vienna, he asked what functions had previously been performed under those posts.

93. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Russian Federation) stressed the need to increase the efficiency and productivity of the Department, bearing in mind the considerable resources appropriated to it. His delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation to reduce travel costs to a minimum. It also supported the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a Reconstruction and Development Support Unit in Vienna, and was surprised by the Advisory Committee's position in that respect.

94. The United Nations Secretariat was carrying out a reform of the procurement process, and in that context it was unacceptable for the Department for Development Support and Management Services to remain outside that process. It was important to centralize the procurement services of the United Nations so as to effect savings and maintain a unified administrative structure which would take a professional and coordinated approach to the procurement of goods and services. The Advisory Committee's proposal should be supported and the Secretariat should study it carefully.

95. Mr. TOYA (Japan) said that he supported the proposal to establish a P-3 post for the Reconstruction and Development Support Unit in Vienna, since its activities related not only to countries with economies in transition but also to a new dimension, namely, the region of the former Yugoslavia.

96. Ms. BUERGO (Cuba) said that her delegation attached particular importance to the Department and its activities related to technical coordination and cooperation and assistance to developing countries. In that respect, it was concerned about the level of resources proposed for the Department's programmes, which was being reduced by some 5.4 per cent. She wondered whether the Department would be able to carry out all the activities envisaged for the biennium in view of that reduction.

97. She also expressed concern about the mandates for the establishment of the Reconstruction and Development Support Unit, which would perform the functions listed in paragraph 9.8 of the proposed programme budget. She reiterated that her delegation had no difficulty with the establishment of that Unit, but was concerned that the activities listed in paragraph 9.8 of the proposed programme budget went far beyond the functions of support to reconstruction and development.

98. In some parts of the narrative of section 9, the role of the Governments of Member States was ignored in the context of the request for assistance for the Department's various activities. In particular there were omissions in respect of the sovereignty of States over their natural resources, a question which had been adequately reflected in the drafting of the medium-term plan but did not appear in that section of the budget.

99. Lastly, she reiterated her position regarding the use of concepts such as "sustainable human development" in the narrative of that section of the budget, although they had not been approved by the General Assembly, and requested an amendment in that respect.

100. Mr. GOUMENNY (Ukraine) said that he fully supported the proposals made by the Secretary-General in paragraph 9.8 of the proposed programme budget. His delegation attached particular importance to the participation of the Department for Development Support and Management Services in the processes that were currently taking place in the former Yugoslavia. It also supported the recommendation made by the Advisory Committee in paragraph IV.26 of its report that the establishment in Vienna of a Reconstruction and Development Support Unit should be approved

101. Mr. CHU Guangyou (China) said that the human and financial resources of the Department for Development Support and Management Services were tending to diminish, and that was giving rise to concern in many developing countries, since the Department provided them with direct assistance in the area of technical cooperation and the development of human resources. Although his delegation agreed with other delegations that the Department's functions overlapped those of other United Nations departments, it believed that the appropriate solution would be to try to reduce overlap as far as possible and not, as those delegations had proposed, to merge the functions of the departments concerned.

102. With regard to reform of the United Nations, he stressed that that was a very serious undertaking which should not be carried out lightly. It was important to learn from the attempts at reform in the past and to be well aware that a State could not impose its reform measures on other States, but must consult all the Member States of the Organization, the Main Committees and the departments concerned about such measures.

103. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that the reduction of resources for the Department for Development Support and Management Services resulted from two proposals: first, the proposal to transfer technical cooperation services for the countries with economies in transition of Eastern Europe and the former Yugoslavia from Geneva to Vienna, primarily, and secondarily to New York, and

second, to abolish three General Service posts providing secretarial services. Although he took note of the concern expressed in that respect by various delegations, he said that the implementation of those two proposals would enable the Department to provide better services, since the countries receiving technical assistance were closer to Vienna than Geneva, so that there would be economies in staff, travel, and other costs. Those measures were a response to the mandate entrusted to the Secretary-General by the General Assembly in resolutions 48/181 and 49/106 concerning the integration of the economies in transition into the world economy.

104. He took note of the Advisory Committee's recommendation and said that the Secretariat intended to take it up when it considered new economy measures to be adopted to improve the efficiency of the system.

105. Mr. HALBWACHS (Director, Programme Planning and Budget Division) said that the 17 posts to be transferred from Geneva to New York and Vienna were concerned with fellowships and the technical assistance recruitment function.

106. The CHAIRMAN said that he took it that the Committee had completed the first reading of section 9 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 and decided to refer it to informal consultations for further consideration and appropriate action.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.